

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-15 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13

JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 USIA-15

NSC-10 SCI-06 OMB-01 PM-07 DODE-00 AID-20 L-03 H-03

PA-03 PRS-01 IGA-02 MC-02 ACDA-19 /158 R

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R 080027Z AUG 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 156066

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TH, BM, LA

SUBJECT: GUNS-FOR-NARCOTICS TRADING IN GOLDEN TRIANGLE

1. THE SUGGESTION HAS OFTEN BEEN MADE THAT GUB AND RTG EFFORTS TO CURB NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING FROM THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE MIGHT BE ENHANCED IF EFFECTIVE COMPLEMENTARY ACTION COULD BE TAKEN TO CURB TRAFFICKING INTO THE AREA OF WEAPONS NEEDED BY BURMESE DISSIDENT GROUPS. THIS IS BASED UPON THE PREMISE THAT WEAPONS PURCHASES ARE FINANCED TO A SIGNIFICANT EXTENT BY PROCEEDS FROM ILLICIT NARCOTICS SALES.

2. WHILE WE REALIZE THAT THE DEMAND FOR WEAPONS IS NOT THE ONLY DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE ILLICIT NARCOTICS TRADE,
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IT IS NO DOUBT A FACTOR. IN ADDITION, WEAPONS TRAFFICKING

UNDOUBTEDLY CONTRIBUTES TO THE ATMOSPHERE OF CORRUPTION, LAWLESSNESS AND DISSIDENCE IN THE AREA WHICH HAS BEEN CON-
DUCIVE TO DRUG SMUGGLING AND INHIBITORY TO NARCOTICS SUP-
PRESSION EFFORTS. GUN SMUGGLING IS, OF COURSE, A BAD
THING FOR OTHER REASONS AS WELL AND WE ARE SURE THAT
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES IN ALL THREE GOVERNMENTS CON-
CERNED WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT STOPPED. THIS PROBLEM MAY WELL
BECOME MORE SEVERE AS PEACE IN INDOCHINA REDUCES ACTIVE
COMBAT REQUIREMENTS FOR WEAPONS, THUS PRESUMABLY MAKING
THEM AVAILABLE ON A LARGER SCALE FOR BLACK MARKET OPERA-
TIONS.

3. WE BELIEVE, THEREFORE, THAT THIS SIDE OF THE NARCOTICS
PROBLEM DESERVES CLOSER ATTENTION THAN IT HAS BEEN GIVEN
HERETOFORE--NOTWITHSTANDING THE OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES IT
POSES. AS A BEGINNING, REQUEST THAT EMBASSIES BANGKOK
AND VIENTIANE REVIEW WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS EXIST-
ING PROCEDURES FOR CONTROLLING AND ACCOUNTING FOR MILI-
TARY AND POLICE WEAPONS WITH A VIEW TO DETERMINING
WHETHER MORE EFFECTIVE PROCEDURES ARE CALLED FOR. IN
ADDITION WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF
FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED
(INCLUDING THE US) FOR SYSTEMATIC IDENTIFICATION AND
TRACING OF NEW TYPE WEAPONS (E.G., M-16'S, M-40'S, ETC.)
CAPTURED BY THE BURMA ARMY FROM INSURGENT AND DRUG
TRAFFICKING GROUPS. THIS CONCEIVABLY COULD LEAD TO INFOR-
MATION ON ILLICIT WEAPONS CHANNELS AND SOURCES THAT WOULD
BE USEFUL IN DEVISING BETTER CONTROLS.

4. WILL APPRECIATE ADDRESSEE COMMENTS. ROGERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE156066
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JBDexter:GMD
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS DEXTER
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730850/aaaabkvb.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Nov-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <28 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GUNS-FOR-NARCOTICS TRADING IN GOLDEN TRIANGLE
TAGS: SNAR, TH, BM, LA
To: RANGOON VIENTIANE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005